one in which the marking has not yet been initiated. BIS has neither received any complaint from any quarter against the BIS certified product nor any complaint is pending with the BIS.

(b) question does not arise.

Substandard Gold Articles

1985. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that people in our country are purchasing around 15 percent of substandard gold articles and losing their hard earned money annually, according to the Bureau of Indian Standards;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken against such unethical business?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) During the year 2001-2002, Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) had conducted surveys in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Bangalore, Ahmedabad and Kolkata, associating consumer activists to find out the actual purity of gold jewellery available in the market as against the claims made by jewellers. About 11% of the samples tested were found conforming to the purity claimed. The survey revealed the average shortage of purity of 11%. India consumes around 880 tonnes of gold every year, of which 80% goes into jewellery manufacturing. Based on average 11% shortage in purity, as revealed in the survey, loss to consumers could be estimated at around Rs. 6000 crores annually.

(b) and (c) In order to protect the interests of the common consumers in the purchase of gold jewellery, BIS have launched the Hallmarking Scheme for Gold Jewellery.